

Meeting Your Needs

When you identify a need, see if you can break it down further into an even more specific need. Ask yourself, what would it look like if this need were met? Or, what would it take to meet this need? Perhaps you've identified a need to feel more love in your life. What would it look like if this need were met? Would you receive more affection? More connection? More intimacy? If it's clear that you need more connection, what would it take to meet this need? More time on the phone with good friends, better listening from your spouse, or something else? If you want better listening from your spouse, try back to me what he hears rather than just saying uh-huh."

Perhaps you identify a need for more support. What does that to be even more specific. For example: "I need John to take fifteen to twenty minutes a few nights per week and lovingly listen to me and reflect mean? More encouragement? More help with household chores? Which chores? The more specific you can be in identifying your needs, the easier it will be for you to meet them.

Once you identify a need, it may take some flexibility and creativity to meet it. It's often easier to identify and meet physical needs than emotional needs. This is the point where you will access your thinking self and come up with a few ways to meet each need. The more you let go of rigid expectations and black-and-white thinking, the more you'll open yourself up to finding a satisfying solution.

Let's say you identify the need for adventure and stimulation and would love to take a long, action-oriented vacation but don't have the time or budget to do so. Perhaps a train ride to a new and different location or a hike in an unexplored area could partially meet this need. Maybe you've identified the need to be touched more often but lack a friend or partner who might provide this. Getting a regular massage or snuggling with a favorite furry companion could temporarily meet this need while you focus on ways to bring affectionate people into your life.

When you've identified one, two, or even three possible ways to meet a need, it's time to commit to action. This is where intention and followthrough are

important. Intention means that you intend to focus on this need. If you're not committed to meeting this need, you might sabotage your success.

Follow-through is needed to make sure you stick with your goal until it's met. It may take many attempts or additional time to meet a need. Choose baby steps that allow you to succeed at meeting the need. Big lofty plans can leave you feeling like a failure, concluding that "this need can't be met" or "I'm just not equipped to meet my own needs."

Some of the needs you identify may be needs that were not adequately met in infancy or early childhood. Perhaps you crave attention, soothing, comfort, reassurance, safety, security, approval, or validation. Maybe you long to be held and hugged. You may be yearning for protection and a relief from distress. This is perfectly okay. The alliance formed between your Inner Nurturer and feeling self will be the key to ultimately meeting these most basic needs and getting your developmental train [back on track](#). You strengthen this alliance and the voice of your Inner Nurturer every time you turn within and practice your Inner Conversations. Over time, you'll find that your needs grow up and become more appropriate for your age.